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‘SINCE THE BEGINNING’
A TALE OF AN 
EASTERN LAND

BY
HUGH CLIFFORD

Author of ‘In Court and Kampong,’
‘Studies in Brown Humanity,’ etc.

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1898
To the Other Six

A schoolroom bright with warmth and light
And ringing with our clamour;
A garden fair, all scented air
And summer evening glamour;
A stately pile, with nave and aisle,
Where all our squadron prays;
Such are the things our memory brings
Of golden bygone days.

The much-loved boat, that lolls afloat
Upon the sunny Rance;
The tennis-bats 'neath Avranche hats;
The sounds and scents of France;
The days too short, when we were caught
By bed-time ere we knew;
They bring a smile, but all the while
The tears are near us too.

Now far and wide upon life's tide
We've drifted on our ways,
But near or far no change can mar
The thought of other days;
And far or near, what room for fear,
Since we can never lose
That simple love, all things above,
That little children use.

H. C.
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Since the Beginning such has been the Fate
Of Man, whose very Clay was soaked in Tears,
For when at first of common Earth they took
And moulded to the stature of the Soul,
For Forty Days, full Forty Days, the Cloud
Of Heaven wept over Him from head to foot.
And when the Forty Days had passed to Night,
The Sunshine of one Solitary Day
Looked out from Heaven to dry the weeping Clay.
And though the Sunshine through the long arrear
Of Darkness on the Breathless Image rose,
Yet for the Living, well the Wise Man knows,
Such Consummation scarcely shall be here.

Salaman and Absal.